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THE CHILD OF THE REGIMENT.

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THE

CHILD OF THE REGIMENT.

Comic Opera

IN THREE ACTS.

Music by

DONIZETTI.

English Version by

OSCAR WEIL.

BOSTON:
ALFRED MUDGE & SON, PRINTERS,
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THE CHILD OF THE REGIMENT.

CHARACTERS.

SERGEANT SULPICE, of the Twentieth Grenadiers.

TONY, recruit in the Twentieth Grenadiers.

CORPORAL, Twentieth Grenadiers.

BRUNO, Steward of Countess Berkenfeldt.

MARIE, Child of the Twentieth.

THE COUNTESS OF BERKENFELDT.

BABETTE, a Chambermaid.

SOLDIERS AND PEASANTS.

476

THE CHILD OF THE REGIMENT.

ACT FIRST.

SCENE. *A Valley in the Tyrolese Mountains.*

CHORUS.

The foe is approaching,
The hour is at hand.
Now Heav'n must protect us,—
Save us and our land.
Be silent and cautious,
And Heav'n save our land.
See us imploring,
Humbly adoring,
Merciful Heaven, hear us this day,
Guard us from danger, humbly we pray.

[*Enter* COUNTESS *and* BRUNO.]

BRUNO. Noble Countess, there 's no danger,
I can protect you, rely on me.

COUNTESS. Nought but ruin and destruction
In the future I can see.

ENSEM. See us imploring, etc.

PEASANT. Not a Frenchman can be seen upon the mountains; take heart, my comrades; we are free from danger.

ENSEMBLE.

From dread of the stranger,
Our hearts at last are free.
No longer in danger
Are home and liberty.
What pleasure, what gladness!
Let 's sing a joyful strain,
Now banish all sadness,
Let mirth o'er us reign. [*Exit all the* CHORUS.

BRUNO. There, Miladi; you see everything turns out just as I predicted. The French are in full retreat before our victorious troops.

COUNTESS. I wish I might be sure of that; they may return at any moment.

BRUNO. That is not likely since they are clearly outnumbered. So, have courage, Miladi; by to-morrow you will be at your castle of Berkenfeldt, in perfect security.

COUNTESS. Yes, and probably find everything there turned topsy-turvy by those horrid soldiers,—the larder emptied of everything eatable, and the cellar of everything drinkable; horses, plate, and valuables gone, and nothing but the bare walls left. Oh! war is a dreadful thing! I don't see why they have it.

BRUNO. And our friends, the Austrians, are as bad as our enemies, the Frenchmen; what the one leaves when he marches out, the other takes when he marches in. It was just so when the French were in Vienna.

COUNTESS. Don't remind me of that dreadful time, Bruno; it makes me tremble, even now, to think of it. Is my carriage safe?

BRUNO. Yes, Miladi; and the horses and your trunks as well. If you like to rest at the inn here until tomorrow, I 'm sure the good people will do their best to make you comfortable.

COUNTESS. I suppose I shall have to stop, whether it 's comfortable or not. Yes, I 'll go in, but if the Frenchmen should come back?

BRUNO. Don't be uneasy about them, Miladi; there probably is n't one of them within five miles of us by this time. Besides, even if they should come back, — am I not here?

COUNTESS. But you are only one, Bruno, and they are thousands!

BRUNO. Thousands of Frenchmen, — mere Frenchmen, Miladi! I am a Tyrolese, — a son of the mountains and crags.

COUNTESS. And how is that going to help us?

BRUNO. You shall see, Miladi, — when the hour of danger is at hand, you shall see. Permit me, — landlord! landlord! Oh! the landlord is a landlady. (*Exit* COUNTESS *into inn.*) The hour of danger is, unfortunately, at this very moment, on the other side of yon mountain, over five miles away, and I shall have no opportunity of distinguishing myself in the service of my mistress. Worse luck, too; for my courage is up, the blood courses through my veins with heroic ardor, and if a whole phalanx of grenadiers were to halt before me at this moment (SULPICE *appears at back*), I should stand unmoved; I should regard them with an air of dignity and exclaim in a voice of thunder (SULPICE *touches* BRUNO *on the shoulder*), Who are you?

SUL. Halt! What are you doing here?

BRUNO. Merely admiring the prospect.

SUL. What do you tremble at?

BRUNO. The mountain air is chilly; don't you feel it?

SUL. The air chilly! Sacre bleu! — it 's quite hot!

BRUNO. Well, it is warmer than it was; I perspire from head to foot.

SUL. Ha! ha! What fools one meets with in this country!

BRUNO. Excuse me, I am travelling with my mistress, who is anxious to proceed to her chateau, — that is, if you will permit her.

SUL. How old is she?

BRUNO. I should say on the north side of fifty.

SUL. Had she been fifteen, it would be a different matter; permission is granted.

BRUNO. Without molestation? Without insult?

SUL. What do you call insult?

BRUNO. Rudeness.

SUL. I don't understand you.

BRUNO. Familiarity or —

SUL. Bah! she 's perfectly safe; the soldiers of the French army respect their grandmothers.

BRUNO. Thank ye, Captain.

SUL. Sergeant! And tell your trembling peasantry, who have barricaded themselves in their houses, or may be are in ambuscade in the woods, that they may now show their sheepish faces in safety, for peace is about to be proclaimed.

BRUNO. Yes, Captain.

SUL. Sergeant!

BRUNO. What does he keep on calling me sergeant for?

SUL. And if they object to become Bavarians, let them be Frenchmen; such is the imperial command. I have not read it myself, for one very good reason.

BRUNO. A thousand thanks, Captain!

SUL. Sergeant! Call me out of my rank again, and by the Emperor's little cocked hat, I 'll —

BRUNO. Say no more, Sergeant, — the first man I ever met who objected to flattery. I 'll tell my lady to keep quiet till this ferocious sergeant has followed his regiment.

[*Exit* BRUNO *into inn.*

SUL. (*Enters.*) By Jove, they 've been well frightened. 'T was glorious to see those fellows fly before us. On every roadside we have posted the proclamation, and it 's clear as broad daylight, "Whoever proposes to side with the Bavarians is a foe to the Frenchman." That 's all there is about it. (MARIE *heard singing*

outside.) Who is that? Why, Marie, our pretty daughter, the jewel and the glory of the Twentieth!

[*Enter* MARIE.]

Yes, it is she, and by Jove, she 's a beauty! How fortunate the regiment to possess such a daughter!

MAR. It is my boast and glory to belong to the regiment! I love it! It watched my tender years with tender care and unvarying kindness.

SUL. That it did!

MAR. The Twentieth was my only father, my only brother, my only guardian.

SUL. So it was.

MAR. But then, I rather think I do them credit.

SUL. Ah! all she says and does is charming.

MAR. And, like a soldier's, high beats this heart in my bosom.

In camp and in battle
I glory and I delight.
When loud cannons rattle,
Inspiring the fight,
My comrades, victorious,
Respond to their country's call
For France; it is glorious
On battle-field to fall.

SUL. And, I may boast, 't was I unaided
That made her manners what now they are.
Where is the countess, aye, or the duchess,
In grace and talent can with her compare?
No, no, there is not one.

ENSEMBLE.

In camp and in battle
I glory and I delight,
When loud cannons rattle,
Inspiring the fight.
Rataplan! Rataplan!

SUL. And now, grenadier of the Twentieth, give an account of yourself. How came you here, against orders, at that?

MAR. Could n't resist your familiar mustache, Sergeant, of which I caught a glimpse, as I halted to get some water at the spring below. Little Goulard, my youngest father, was almost faint with thirst; poor fellow! he 's scarcely more than a recruit, and the hard day's march had been too much for him; but a drop of Eau de Vie from my canteen and a cup of spring water soon brought

him round. "Heads up," says I. "Yes, my child," says he. "Left foot forward," says I. "Yes, my child," says he. "March," says I, and off he went again, as bravely as the oldest grenadier of the line.

SUL. What father would n't be proud of such a daughter?

MAR. And what daughter would n't be proud of eight hundred such fathers as I have. They are my only relations, my only friends, my only companions.

SUL. Relations, friends, and companions that never diminish in number; for when we do lose one of the brave fellows in battle, his place is filled by another, who is educated by the old ones as I have educated you. Ah! Marie, many a good comrade have we lost out of the regiment since our battle on this very spot, sixteen years ago. There is nobody left of the old stock but me.

MAR. And me! You and I are the oldest grenadiers of the regiment.

SUL. How well I remember that day. The Austrians were flying before us; the roads were filled with dying soldiers and broken artillery. Our regiment was suddenly halted, when, amongst a heap of slain, in the arms of a dead peasant and sheltered only by the wheels of a gun-carriage, I perceived a child. There she lay, laughing at the tumult around her, and stretching out her little hands for some one to take her.

MAR. 'T was I!

SUL. "Soldiers," cried our captain, as he held you up in front of the line (poor fellow! he now reposes in Marango), "here is a child for us. Shall the regiment adopt it?" "Yes, yes," roared out every grenadier, and you were handed to me. My knapsack was the first on which you were carried, and you became the adopted daughter of the Twentieth of the line.

MAR. The Child of the Regiment!

SUL. We have never been able to make out either your country or family, although we did find a letter in the pocket of the dead peasant, which afterwards proved to be in the handwriting of a young officer of Chasseurs, who was killed on the same day. But never mind, my girl, we have brought you up carefully, and you have sworn never to marry any one but a soldier of the Twentieth.

MAR. Yes, father; I have sworn!

SUL. You seem to acknowledge your vow with regret. Do you regret it?

MAR. I — I — I 'm afraid I do.

SUL. Hello! What 's that! By the tail of the great eagle —

MAR. Stop, father! Let me explain. I have kept a secret from you; it has made me miserable.

SUL. Go on — have it out!

MAR. One morning, not very long since, I had strayed from the camp, in search of flowers, and found a beatiful blossom peeping out from just below the edge of a precipice. I leaned over to gather it, but it was beyond my reach; I lost my balance, and fell into —

SUL. The river!

MAR. No, — the arms of a young man.

SUL. Hello! That was contrary to the discipline; a young girl should fall into no arms but those of her father.

MAR. I know that! But I could n't remain suspended in mid-air all day waiting for the regiment to come and catch me.

SUL. True! And this young man —

MAR. Was so kind, and so —

SUL. Good-looking, I suppose!

MAR. Well, he was, rather nice. But it 's all over now; I 've bid him good by forever.

SUL. And you feel cut up about it? Never mind, my girl, you 'll soon forget the fellow, and give your love to some brave fellow of the Twentieth.

MAR. I 'll try.

SUL. The whole regiment 'll be your sweetheart.

MAR. Yes, father, — though, of course, it won't be quite the same thing. But I 'll try.

[*Enter Soldiers with* TONY.]

CHORUS.

Come on, come on, t' escape us in vain you try.
We know and punish every traitor spy.

TONY. Good soldiers, softly, softly, pray.
I 'm not at all that which you say.

MAR. Heavens! 't is Tony.

SUL. What 's all this about? Whom have you there?

CORP. A spy, most likely, Sergeant.

MAR. 'T is he who saved me.

SUL. The devil! is this your young Tyrolean?

CHO. Prowling around the camp we found him;
Acting very like a spy,
Noting all he saw around him;
Sure, for that he ought to die.
'T is unpleasant for the peasant,
But, no doubt, he 's bound to die.

MAR. Nay, but hear me, good companions;
My request do not deny,
Heavens! would ye doom him to death
Who saved my life!

CHO. What is this?

SUL. Indeed, she tells you truly.

CHO. Well, if that be so,
Just count on us to spare him.

MAR. Once by a giddy torrent,
I lost my hold and fell;
He, being near, sprang forward,
At the peril of his life,
And rescued me.
Now, shall he die?

CORP. No, indeed! If he did that,
He 's a capital fellow.
Come, let 's be comrades.

TONY. Oh, certainly! That 's the only way I can think of at present to remain near my charmer.

SUL. Now listen! Let 's drink a bumper
To the health of him
Who saved our daughter.
Pledge him with joy.
Our new companion's health.

CHO. Our new companion's health.

SUL. Pass round the rum.
Here 's to our new acquaintance,
And here 's to fair Bavaria:
That is a toast will surely please you.

TONY. Not so; I drink to France, or not at all;
Yes, here 's to France, and you, my gallant comrades.

CHO. That was well said.
To France and to thy comrades.

SUL. And, that his welcome may be perfect,
Sing us, Marie, your own especial ditty.

CHO. Yes, the song of the regiment.

SONG. — MARIE.

First in the army, well it is known,
Our gallant Twentieth always holds it own;
Nothing can daunt us, no foe withstand,
Gayly we conquer throughout the land.

Proudly our eagles lift their heads on high,
For glory and honor follow where they fly.
Here we are, here we are, here we are, we say;
In we go, with a dash, and we win the day.
Here we are, here we are, — it is done;
Bring on the Twentieth, the battle is won.

CHO. Here we are, etc.

MAR. When from the field to France we return,
Bright eyes in thousands for our lads will burn;
Sweethearts in plenty each one will find,
For to the Twentieth the sex was ever kind.
Glory and beauty make a gallant pair;
Part of our duty was always to the fair.

CHO. Here we are, etc.

[*Drum heard outside.*]

SUL. There 's roll call! Now be off to quarters. (*To* TONY.) As for you, you may go to — to — the devil, if you like.

TONY. Yes, Sergeant!

MAR. He is my prisoner; I will answer for him.

SUL. And who 's to answer for you? No, no, my child, discipline must be preserved. (*To* TONY.) Come, be off with you.

TONY. Old brute! [*Exit.*]

SUL. Come, my child.

MAR. Yes, father. [*Exit* SULPICE *and* MARIE.

CHORUS.

Hark, how the drum is rolling to duty,
The soldier must obey,
And at the hour of danger
None may trifle or delay;
The soldier may not sorrow,
Nor give a thought to care;
Uncertain of to-morrow,
He lives to do and dare.

[*Exeunt Soldiers.*

MAR. [*Enters.*] Of course, I mean to do my duty and keep my promise to Father Sulpice, but that 's no reason why I should n't see Tony once more, just for a little minute. Not that I love him, — oh, no, — I 've promised not to do that, but just to tell him how grateful I am to him for saving my life, — to say a last farewell, — and — and —

TONY. [*Enters.*] Marie!

MAR. Oh! I thought they had taken you away.

TONY. They did take me; but yonder, where the road turns by the bridge, I gave them the slip, and got back by a path that I knew and they did n't.

MAR. How rash! Suppose they should find you here.

TONY. Let them; I shall have seen you again, and told you once again that I love you.

MAR. Yes, I know, — but it 's impossible.

TONY. What! that I should love you?

MAR. No, — not that!

TONY. What, then? What 's impossible?

MAR. That we should — be married.

TONY. Why is it impossible? What 's the reason I can't marry you? I 've a plantation of mulberries; I send enough silk to the weavers to keep us very comfortably. I 'm half a Frenchman, for my father was one, though my mother was Tyrolese; I 've a bit of a cottage, plenty of relations, all pretty well off. I 've a cow and other conveniences, and I 'm not the ugliest fellow in the world,— who says it 's impossible?

MAR. My father, Sergeant Sulpice.

TONY. What! that ugly, old, wrinkled, grizzly bear?

MAR. Tony, I won't hear my father abused.

TONY. Who was the soldier that wanted to shoot me?

MAR. He 's my father.

TONY. Two fathers! How 's that?

MAR. Did you observe the corporal?

TONY. I did.

MAR. He 's my father, too.

TONY. Father two! — father three it seems, and those old fellows, below there, with the beards and large aprons, and hatchets —

MAR. All my fathers.

TONY. Why, the whole regiment —

MAR. Is my father.

TONY. And how many have you?

MAR. I have eight hundred at present.

TONY. Well, I 've heard of forefathers, but eight hundred! Then as I want to marry you, and as the father's consent must always be had in such matters, it would take me half a year to get the consent of all of them. You are joking!

MAR. No, from infancy, I have been protected by the regiment, and I have never known any other relation; I call it my father. And now, Tony, you must return to your mulberry-trees, for I have made a vow never to marry but to a soldier of the Twentieth.

TONY. You have?

MAR. But take comfort; I shall never marry at all.

TONY. But you shall marry, and you shall marry me! Farewell to the mulberry-trees! Farewell to the silk-worms! Farewell to the cottage! Farewell to the cow! Farewell to everything and everybody, and huzza for drums, trumpets, muskets, and cannon balls! I will join the regiment; it wants recruits; they can't refuse a fine fellow like me, and half a Frenchman too! Then I shall be one of the Twentieth; I shall be your father, and give myself my own consent to marry you! Aha! What do you say to that?

MAR. Have you courage?

TONY. Courage! for you I 'd brave anything. Courage! try me! give me a smile and I 'd fight with a wolf; give me a kind word, I 'd fight with a bear; give me a kiss, and I 'd have a tussle with a lion.

MAR. Brave Tony, become one of us, and then no one can say us nay.

DUET. — TONY *and* MARIE.

TONY. A vision fair, my senses thrilling,
I saw, and loved then with all my heart;
Since then thy image my fancy filling,
Peace cannot find me save where thou art.

MAR. But, young man, — this is but memory, —
Only memory, and nothing more.

TONY. Ah, no, no! 't is not so;
Hear me, dearest, and I 'll show
It is not memory, but something more.

MAR. I will! say on!

TONY. For home and country, so dearly cherished,
With fire and ardor my heart once burned,
But love of country and home has perished.
To thee, Marie, my heart has turned.

MAR. Indifference so shameful
I never could forgive.

TONY. But if from thee I far must languish,
My life were hateful, despised each breath,
To free my heart from its pain and anguish,
I braved to see thee, — a shameful death.

MAR. Ah, yes, he loves me: I see it all,
And I am happy, let what will befall.

ENSEMBLE.

So tender an avowal
Sets every doubt aside.
Severe has been our trial, —
Love will not be denied.

SUL. (*Enters.*) Sacr — r — r — bleu! What 's this? (*To* TONY.) Did n't I give you marching orders?

TONY. } Yes, but —
MAR. }

SUL. But, you have n't gone! Well, I 'll see that you do, at a double quick! (*To* MARIE.) And you, too!

MAR. But, Father Sulpice —

SUL. Not a word. I won't have it.

TONY. You shall listen! I love Marie, and Marie loves me.

SUL. Never! never! Marie has sworn never to marry any but one of her fathers.

TONY. But if I were her father!

SUL. You are not, and that ends the matter. So now be off with you.

TONY. I won't go!

SUL. You won't! Then by the tail of the great eagle, I 'll order out a platoon of the Twentieth and have you shot.

MAR. Oh! Tony, go,— for my sake, go!

TONY. I will, but mind, I don't give you up. I 'll have you in spite of all the fathers in Christendom, and with their consent, at that. Don't think, sir, I 'm running because I 'm afraid. I 'll have my revenge when I come back. [*Exit.*]

MAR. How could you treat my Tony so roughly? I don't like it!

SUL. Was I to stand by and see you wheedled away from the regiment by a sneaking —

MAR. Hush! father, I won 't have him abused, and I shall hate you if I find that you give way to such savage feelings. Your heart must be growing hard and wicked; and mark what I say, if you intend to play the tyrant with me, and if the regiment follow your example, I 'll leave you all. There are more regiments in the French army than one. Oh! you may stare at me, but you 've roused my blood, so stop in time, Sergeant Sulpice, or I 'll follow my own inclinations in spite of you. Sacre bleu! [*Exit.*]

SUL. This it is to give a child a good education. What! change her father? Muskets, bombs, and sabres!

[*Enter* COUNTESS *and* BRUNO.]

COUNTESS. If the roads are clear I don't see why we should n't go on at once. There 's certainly no sense in my stopping here over night.

BRUNO. I was only saying, madame, that I don't think it will be safe to travel without an escort. The roads are full of soldiers.

COUNTESS. Very well, tell this man that I want an escort; I'll pay for it.

BRUNO. I really think, Countess, that you had better speak to him. A lady's request is bound to be law with a soldier.

COUNTESS. Very well, I 'm not afraid of him.

SUL. Deuce take this love business! it 's the ruin of all discipline.

COUNTESS. Excuse me, Captain.

SUL. Sergeant, madame.

BRUNO. Yes. Sergeant, Miladi!

COUNTESS. I was about to ask —

BRUNO. Her ladyship was about to request —

SUL. Silence, sir! Proceed, madame.

BRUNO. Precisely — her ladyship wishes to proceed to —

COUNTESS. If I could have a small escort, I shall be very happy to pay —

BRUNO. To reward — indemnify —

COUNTESS. To — to —

SUL. I'll speak to the colonel; where is your château?

COUNTESS. About a league distant. If you will say to the colonel that the Countess of Berkenfeldt —

SUL. Of Berken —

BRUNO. — feldt. We are Berkenfeldt.

SUL. Is that your name, madame?

COUNTESS. Certainly.

BRUNO. Most assuredly.

SUL. That 's the name. I 'm sure it is.

COUNTESS. What name, Monsieur Captain?

SUL. It was in a letter found on the body of a peasant after a battle that took place on this very spot, sixteen years ago; Lieutenant Robert, of the Chasseurs, in whose handwriting the letter proved to be, was killed in the same fight, so we never found any clew.

COUNTESS. Lieutenant Robert! Dead, did you say?

SUL. Yes, madame, dead in battle. You knew him?

COUNTESS. I! No, no! — that is — a lady of my family knew him very well.

SUL. A lady of your family!

COUNTESS. My — my sister.

SUL. Is your sister still alive?

COUNTESS. No — but —

SUL. And was she in any way related to Lieutenant Robert?

COUNTESS. They were married, but secretly, as he was a Frenchman, while she was of the Austrian nobility.

SUL. Were there any children?

COUNTESS. One daughter, who, on the eve of a frightful battle, was, at his request, sent to him in care of a trusty servant. The battle commenced earlier than was anticipated, the servant and child were both killed, and my sister was left a childless widow.

SUL. This child, had she lived, would have been your niece?

COUNTESS. Yes, sole heiress to the Barony of Berkenfeldt.

SUL. Madame, that child was saved — was found on the field, adopted by my regiment, the Twentieth Grenadiers of the line, and is at this moment alive and kicking.

BRUNO. Kicking!

COUNTESS. Heavens! Alive, do you say? Where is she? Let me see her.

SUL. I shall have to find her first. She left me, only a moment since, in a devil of a passion!

BRUNO. But, Miladi, — the proof, documents, corroborative evidence —

SUL. Plenty of proof, and documents, too, — all as straight as a muster-roll! I found her lying in the arms of the dead peasant, from whose pocket I took this letter. You may read it.

COUNTESS. "I have seen my darling little Marie, and embraced her. If I survive this battle, even the house of Berkenfeldt may yet acknowledge without a blush the poor Lieutenant Robert." Yes, it is his hand! May I keep this?

SUL. Not at present, Miladi! I must consult the colonel first.

COUNTESS. And Marie! How has she been reared; how educated?

SUL. Like a perfect lady, madame! Her fathers have looked after her manners, and I rather think she does them credit.

MAR. [*Enters.*] Sacre bleu! By the tail of the great eagle, I've the most pig-headed set of fathers of any girl in the army. But I'll show them —

BRUNO. How that girl swears! You must retire out of the sound of such language.

COUNTESS. Shocking! Bruno, my vinaigrette.

MAR. Sergeant! Father Sulpice! Oh, I say, are you going to cut up rough, just because I lost my temper for a minute or two? Sergeant! All right then, be as cross as you like. I know it won't be long before you are ready to make up with your little Marie.

COUNTESS. Marie! Is that the child?

BRUNO. That she, Grenadier! Impossible!

SUL. She is your niece, madame. Shall I tell her?

COUNTESS. Immediately, I implore you!

SUL. Marie —

MAR. Ah, you forgive me, — you dear old bear of a father!

SUL. Marie, my child, your family muster-roll has been made up entirely of fathers hitherto, — not a single mother.

MAR. No, alas.

SUL. Well, we 've found you one.

MAR. My mother!

SUL. Yes — but — well — ahem — she 's dead.

MAR. Ah ! why did you make my heart jump so? I tremble from head to foot.

SUL. But I have discovered you belong to a great family.

MAR. A great family! not a greater family than I belong to already ?

SUL. I am serious; your aunt is here. She is rich and noble.

MAR. My aunt ! I don't believe it.

COUNTESS. Indeed, 't is true, my child. I need no further proof of your birth than those features, — they remind me in every line of one who was most dear. Let me embrace you.

MAR. You must have loved my mother, you embrace me so kindly, so tenderly. I have never known a kind embrace excepting from my fathers.

COUNTESS. Your fathers !

MAR. Yes, indeed, the entire regiment is my father; I love them all.

SUL. The old letter in my knapsack was written by your real father. It seems you are an orphan; your aunt will protect you henceforth.

COUNTESS. And you will live with me. Your future will be my care.

MAR. What, leave the Twentieth, and abandon my old friends and comrades ! Oh ! no, no.

COUNTESS. My child !

MAR. If I could have the heart to leave you, I 'm sure you would n't part with me.

SUL. It will be hard.

COUNTESS. But, Marie, you will have the most elegant surroundings, rich dresses and jewels, plenty of servants, and you will ride in a carriage.

MAR. I 'd rather ride on a knapsack. I don't want any better surroundings than I 've always had, nor any better dresses; and as for servants and society, my eight hundred fathers have been both to me. Oh, Father Sulpice, I can't go.

SUL. Confound the aunt ! I wish she had n't turned up.

COUNTESS. My child!

MAR. Yes.

COUNTESS. Perhaps for a time some of your old friends may remain with you at the castle.

MAR. Oh, then it won't be so bad! But I want every one of them, drummers and all.

BRUNO. Eight hundred of them, Miladi!

COUNTESS. Impossible.

MAR. Then I won't go. Deuce take me if I do!

COUNTESS. Marie!

BRUNO. Promise, my lady; the colonel will never permit it any way.

COUNTESS. In as far as it can be arranged, you shall have your will.

MAR. Then give the word of command, and off we go. We 'll turn the old place into a barracks and make it ring again with our songs and our dances, won't we, father?

SUL. I 'll see what the colonel says about it. Orderly!

COUNTESS. Bruno, you will see that my carriage is ready at the foot of the hill. Come, Marie, we will wait within.

MAR. Yes, aunt. (*Runs to* SULPICE.) I cannot go without you, — I cannot.

COUNTESS. Come, Sergeant, we must make it as easy for her as we can.

[*Enter* CORPORAL *and Soldiers.*]

RATAPLAN CHORUS.

Rataplan, rataplan, hurrah!
To the soldier's ear no sound 's so dear
As the drum with its rattling cheer.
'T is the call, we are here, hurrah!
With our line aright, for parade or fight,
Tap the drum, and we are here.
War thou art fierce, but thou art glorious,
And it is sweet the foeman's land to sack.
Long live fair France, our land victorious,
Ne'er let her sons to die the courage lack.
Rataplan, rataplan, hurrah!

[*Enter* TONY.]

TONY. Yes, it is I, whom but now you were scorning
As one who spoke without a right.
Behold the colors of France me adorning,
For her I love I now may fight!
And though for love my life I surrender,
For my Marie I 'll die with delight!
So, neath your standard I will fight.
For she, my love no more ignoring,
Gives me her heart; and I, adoring
The ground she treads, for her will gladly die.

CHO. This is the deuce; my good lad, are you crazy?
TONY. I love her, and in you my hopes confide.
CHO. Is it Marie your heart has captured?
TONY. 'T is of her father I ask her for my bride,
In you, her father, our faith we rest,
Give your consent, and we are blest.
CHO. The foe we parry, we do not marry,
Our regulations on this are clear;
So 'mongst our ranks now no longer tarry,
Further appealing we will not hear.
TONY. That 's your decision?
CHO. Nothing can change it.
CORP. A soldier of the Twentieth
Alone our child shall wed.
TONY. But then, as you insisted,
You see I have enlisted.
So on that head, there 's surely no more to be said.
CHO. You must be mad.
TONY. Hear me! She returns my passion.
I swear it, by my faith!
CHO. If she has selected,
'T is most unexpected;
But yet, if she loves him, that settles the case,
And we 'd better consent to it with a good grace.
CORP. If you say truly,
All shall end duly.
CHO. And you shall have her
Your own for life;
Yes, our Marie
Shall be your wife.
TONY. Oh what rapture, what delight!
Life is smiling rosy bright.

[*Enter* SULPICE.]

TONY. (*To* SULPICE.) It 's all right now, Sergeant, I 've enlisted. I 'm one of Marie's fathers, and all her other fathers give their consent, so we can be married as soon as ever we like.

SUL. Not so fast, my gallant young recruit. We are no longer her fathers. (*To soldiers.*) Marie is to leave us.

CHO. To leave the regiment!

CORP. Impossible!

SUL. We have discovered her family, and her aunt, the Countess of Berkenfeldt, will be her guardian henceforth. Marie is to live at the chateau.

TONY. And what 's to become of me?

CORP. You can go in for glory, now. Perhaps some day you may rise to be a corporal, if you are n't killed first. (*To* SULPICE.) You 're joking, Sergeant!

SUL. Unfortunately, no.

CORP. But Marie, our little daughter, — is she going to desert us, — to take up with her fine relations?

SUL. It 's hard, comrades, but it is best for her, and I know you wish only what will make her happy.

CORP. How is it going to make her happy, I 'd like to know? She 'll not find truer friends than she has in the Twentieth, — no, not in the whole army.

SUL. Hush! here she is.

[*Enter* MARIE, COUNTESS, *and* BRUNO.]

MAR. 'T is time to part; farewell, my loved companions,
A long and sad farewell, read in my tears;
But from my sight in mercy hide your sorrow,
For, ah, my heart the word of parting fears.

TONY, SUL., CORP. *and* CHO. Farewell, farewell, beloved friends;
Ah, this my happy childhood ends.
Fond dreams, ye vanish; all was delusion,
If she must leave us, there 's naught but woe.
Why must we part from her, why must she go?

TONY. If she goes, I go, too; I 'll not remain.

SUL. You 're bound to follow orders, that is plain.

MAR. Ah, must we thus be parted?
I shall be broken hearted.

SUL. *and* CORP. What sorrow and vexation,
What grief and what despair,
The deuce take that old woman
Into his special care.

With CHO. In toil and in danger,
When fate frowned or smiled,
An angel, bearing comfort,
To us was that dear child.

MARIE *and* TONY. Ah, must I languish far from my love,
What bitter anguish this heart will prove.

MARIE. And now, my loved companions,
A last farewell.
Victor, thy hand, and Henri,
And thou, dear old Tomaso,
I cannot tell
Thee all I feel, Sulpice! embrace me!

COUNTESS. I am shocked, mademoiselle!

CHO. We who lived as child and father,
How can we so lightly part?

TONY. Ever faithful, oh, Marie,
Beats for thee this loyal heart.
I will be true, my love, forever.

MARIE. I will be faithful, love, to thee.
Though fate, our broken lives may sever,
Our hearts are one. Remember me.

COUNTESS. Come, niece, we must away now.

BRUNO. The carriage waits, you see.

CHO. What sorrow and vexation,
What grief, and what despair!

CORP. *and* SUL. The deuce take that old woman
Into his special care.

END OF ACT FIRST.

ACT SECOND.

SCENE. *Grand Salon in Berkenfeldt Castle.*

BRUNO. Babette! Babette!

BAB. Yes, Monsieur Bruno!

BRUNO. Has mademoiselle completed her toilet?

BAB. Bless you, no, monsieur, and it 's only a man, which does n't know anything about toilets, as would ask such a question. Why it is n't an hour since she began dressing.

BRUNO. The Countess!

BAB. She 's dressing, too. I believe they 're expecting company, and if they are, you 're bound to know all about it, and if you do, I wish ever so, you 'd tell me. Come now, Monsieur Bruno, do please.

BRUNO. I don't know about any company.

BAB. You do, only you won't tell, and I think it 's very unkind of you; I tell you everything.

BRUNO. Sure of that?

BAB. Of course I am! Everything.

BRUNO. Well then, you little witch, — we are expecting company.

BAB. There, I knowed it.

BRUNO. Knew it, Babette; they were to have been here to-day, but the duke has been attacked by a severe toothache, and cannot travel. They arrive to-morrow in time for dinner.

BAB. What duke, and who is they?

BRUNO. The Duke of Ahremburg, who accompanied by the duchess, his mother, comes to make a formal demand for the hand of Mademoiselle Marie.

BAB. The Duke of Ahremberg! What a grand match! I 've heard though — Lieschen told me — which she lived with the Ahremberg when they was in Vienna — that they 're poor as church mice.

BRUNO. Very true, my dear. But a duke is a duke, and we are rich. It 's our money against his title, don't you see?

BAB. Then, too, Lieschen says that he 's the least little snip of a man, with bandy legs.

BRUNO. Nobody ever looks at a duke's legs, you silly! They are supposed to be concealed by his rank.

BAB. You can see them all the same, I suppose, and if they 're bandy, I don't see how being a duke 's going to straighten them out. And for my part, I despises bandy legs, I do!

BRUNO. Yes, bandy legs are not generally admired, I believe. It will be a most desirable alliance for our house, Babette, though we are a very ancient and noble family. I think the Countess won't be sorry to see Mademoiselle Marie properly settled; she 's a little difficult to manage, you know.

BAB. Not if you go the right way about it; she won't be driven, that 's all. But she 's got the best and kindest heart as was ever inside a young lady, and the servants in the house just adores her. There 's the old sergeant as came here with her — Father Sulpice, she calls him — is n't she just like the devotedest kind of a daughter to him?

BRUNO. Yes, undoubtedly! But all that will be at an end now, since one of the conditions of the marriage with the duke is, that the sergeant is not to accompany her to Vienna, where she is to reside.

BAB. Father Sulpice not to go! Then she 'll just break her heart, see if she don't.

BRUNO. The duchess is inflexible on this point, she makes it an ultimatum.

BAB. I don't care what she makes it, it 'll break Mademoiselle's heart! No, it won't; she won't give in to it. She 'll fight (*Bell heard.*)

BRUNO. There 's your bell.

BAB. I know! I would n't go either, if I were she; no, not for all the bandy-legged dukes in Austria, I would n't! (*Bell.*)

BRUNO. But, the bell, Babette!

BAB. Yes, I know; and, as for getting a husband, I suppose a handsome young lady with a fortune to her name need n't go begging very long for somebody to have her, when even poor girls like me has no end of offers, with respectable straight legs under 'em to pick and choose from! Bandy legs! indeed! (*Bell heard.*) Yes 'm.

BRUNO. As his grace is not to arrive until to-morrow, I suppose there 's no great hurry about the settlements, though, of course, miladi will want to look them over. We bring for our portion a house in Vienna, completely furnished and fitted, the reversion of this castle after the death of the Countess, and a sum in government bonds yielding a yearly interest of forty-five thousand

florins. The duke brings his title, and, as Babette says, his bandy legs. Well, it is rather a good thing — for the duke.

[*Exit* BRUNO.

[*Enter* SULPICE.]

SONG. — SULPICE.

With rank and splendor though they surround her,
And try to lure away her heart,
The ties, that have since childhood bound her
Are of her very life a part;
She will not yield them.
Has ne'er concealed them,—
She to her friends is faithful ever,
And never
From me will my darling part.
Yes, I have faith; I do not doubt her,
Though they the snare may spread about her,
Though they have means, and fain would try them,
She can be brave, and will defy them, —
For, ah, my child is she,
Her heart will ever faithful be.
Ah, me, when I remember
Her happy childhood in the dear old Twentieth,
How merry then her life, and how content, —
And what a brave and faithful comrade
She was, our pride and our darling.
Return, ye happy days of old, — return to me,
That I for but a moment may again a soldier be,
That I the eagles of fair France
Before I die may see.
Can they be gone forever,
And shall I see them never,
As when we proudly bore them,
While the foeman flew before them,
And our Emperor led us on?
Oh! eagles of fair France, I pine
To see you once more flash and shine
Before us, as in battle line
We march, — the Emperor leading on.

Poor France! She lies buried under the Bourbon lilies, with the chains of the stranger riveted about her coffin. The Emperor,

prisoner at Elba, and the Twentieth, — Heaven knows where it is now! And my little Marie, they promised to make her happy, and they go about it by cooping her up in this dull old chateau, — fit quarters for old women, — putting her into a uniform that drags about her heels, so that she can't march at a decent parade step, and making her salute bent double, like a jack-knife! It 's a marvel she does n't mutiny.

MAR. [*Enters.*] Sergeant Sulpice!

SUL. Present!

MAR. Advance, Sergeant, and salute! Now stand at attention while I pass in review. There, sir; do we pass muster?

SUL. Charming! Charming! Of course, you don't look as well in that long-tailed dress, nor in any other, for that matter, as you used to in the uniform of the Twentieth, but if you like it, I 'm satisfied.

MAR. I don't like it, Father Sulpice, — and don't suppose I ever shall! But aunty says it 's the proper thing, and of course I have to do as she bids me and wear it.

SUL. Yes, my child.

MAR. For an hour every day my maid drives me nearly wild over dressing, when I could jump into my clothes in ten minutes, if left to myself; after breakfast comes the deportment master, to teach me how to walk; then an hour of singing lesson with aunty; and finally — misery of miseries — the dancing master. I 'm getting dreadfully tired of it all.

SUL. Still, Marie, if you are to be a great lady, I suppose you 'll have to learn all these things!

MAR. But I don't want to be a great lady; I want — I suppose there 's no use in thinking of going back to the dear old Twentieth, now that the Emperor is — is —

SUL. A prisoner! No, child. Everything is changed in France. The sun has gone down there forever.

MAR. Look up, Father Sulpice! Courage, my boy! The Emperor is not dead; while he lives there is hope for France. He will return, — remember it is I who say it, and we shall be with our colors again. Meantime we are Tyroleans. Am not I a Berkenfeldt, — a child of the mountains and crags, as Bruno has it? You shall see. ~~Tyrolean~~! Tyrolienne. Duet.

BRUNO. [*Enters.*] Madame the Countess!

MAR. Good morning, aunty.

COUNTESS. Lower, my child!

MAR. Lower what, aunty?

COUNTESS. Your reverence! Lower, Marie, lower; like this.

MAR. (*Aside.*) I shall never get up again.

COUNTESS. Very well, now draw yourself erect with grace.

MAR. (*Aside.*) I will if I can,—she's worse than a drill sergeant.

COUNTESS. Oh dear, will you never learn to make a perfect courtesy?

MAR. I'm afraid not, aunty, though I do try! (*Aside.*) Bother the courtesy!

COUNTESS. What was that?

MAR. Nothing, aunty, nothing.

COUNTESS. Not aunty, mademoiselle, but aunt. Diminutives are plebeian, —bad form.

MAR. Yes, aunty — I mean, aunt,

COUNTESS. (*Looking at* MARIE.) Very good! Very good, indeed, my dear; all but, there! I think it will do now. If you only would learn to walk.

MAR. I 'm sure I hardly know how to move in all this finery. I feel as if I was buckled up in a cuirass. I wish I could take it all off and jump into my jacket and trousers again.

SUL. Beg pardon, Countess, but you see it is n't natural marching with a lot of petticoats dragging about your heels. Just you put Marie into a trim uniform with her ankles free, and —

COUNTESS. Stop! Stop, sir! How dare you mention anybody's — their — what you did mention, in my presence? How dare you, sir?

MAR. Really, aunty — beg pardon aunt — Father Sulpice meant no harm. He used to be very proud of my ank — mine — you know, when I was in the Twentieth.

SUL. And I 'm sure she could n't help having them, and could n't have marched at all without 'em.

COUNTESS. Pray spare me these vulgar details. I shall ask Monsieur Petipas to give you an extra hour's practice at the grand courtesy to-morrow morning. The Duke of Ahremberg and his mother arrive for dinner, and I wish you then to appear at your best; above all, in matters of etiquette. You understand?

MAR. I think I do.

COUNTESS. The connection will be a most eligible one. The Ahrembergs are of the oldest and most distinguished noblesse.

MAR. Oh, Father Sulpice, what shall I do?

COUNTESS. Ah, here it is, our lovely romanza by Caffarelli. It 's a veritable gem of the old school, in purely classical style, and I mean that you should sing it to the duke. Come, Marie.

MAR. You surely don't mean that I 'm to rehearse it now?

COUNTESS. Certainly, child, I do. I will accompany you.
MAR. Bother the old thing! I wish it were in — All right! Go ahead!

The rosy morning now awaketh,
And fair Venus to earth descends,
Olympian blisses she forsaketh,
And o'er her swain enamoured bends.

SUL. (*Aside.*) We never sung such strains as that.
Rataplan, rataplan, that warms the heart.
MAR. Rataplan, rataplan!
COUNTESS. Child, what are you at?
That is n't of your song a part.
MAR. Oh, pray excuse me, I've lost my place.
COUNTESS. Well, begin again, if that is the case.
MAR. And while the Cyprian goddess gazes
On him who won high valor's prize,
Then o'er his fair and gentle features
A faint smile flies. Her love replies —
SUL. (*To* MAR.) What is the use of all this sighing?
MAR. (*To* SUL.) That is the classical way of replying.
MAR. *and* SUL. Here we are, here we are, here we are, we say,
In we go with a dash, and we win the day.
COUNTESS. Here we are, here we are; it is done;
Bring on the Twentieth; the battle is won.
What is this? What do they sing?
Shocking! I never heard such a thing.
Come, niece, go on! Now recommence.
MAR. (*Aside.*) I wish her song had a spark of sense.
While lovely Venus gazed, thus fondly sighing,
Unto her bower a sound was faintly wafted, —
'T was Philomela, in sweet song replying,
In tender accents sighing forth her woes.
COUNTESS. Very well sung, but you must sigh as she did.
Tra la la la! They I reply as he did!
MAR. Tra la la la.
COUNTESS. Oh, not like that! No, no.
MAR. Tra la.
COUNTESS Now louder.
MAR. La.
COUNTESS. And now quite low.
MAR. Tra la.
COUNTESS. That 's good.
MAR. Tra la.
COUNTESS. That 's bad.

MAR. Tra la. Oh, this will drive me mad.
I 'm tired of this stuff,
My patience is at end ;
I like my old songs better.

COUNTESS. I can't my sanction lend
To conduct such as this.
'T is unbecoming, miss.

MAR. *and* SUL. Rataplan, rataplan, rataplan!
To a soldier's ear no sound's so dear
As the drum with its rattling cheer.

COUNTESS. Oh dear, oh dear,
I sadly fear
She never will be *comme il faut!*

MAR. *and* SUL. To the front! Right about!
With a cheer and a shout!
This is the way we used to go;
Rataplan, rataplan, rataplan!

END OF ACT SECOND.

ACT THIRD.

SCENE. *Grand Salon in Berkenfeldt Castle.*

CHORUS OF LADIES.

There is a secret in this affair,
Ah yes, ah yes.
There is a skeleton hidden somewhere,
But where who can guess.
She wears a sad and dejected air,
Poor thing, not at all such as brides should wear.

SOLO. She is dead.

CHO. She should be merry

SOLO. 'T is a good match,

CHO. Oh, yes, indeed.

SOLO. He is rich?

CHO. Well, no, not very.

SOLO. That is too bad.

CHO. On that we 're agreed.
But, ah, there 's something more
In this, that we must explore.
There 's not a doubt
But that we should find out
The cause of her sadness
And what it 's about.

MDLLE. DE L. Yes, but how 's one going to find out, I should like to know? There 's no getting anything out of her maid.

COUNTESS R. Then you 've tried?

MDLLE. DE L. Of course I have,—that is, I got my maid to. But not a word.

MDLLE. DE N. And you won't get a word either, simply because her maid is n't likely to be in the secret.

COUNTESS R. Then you do think there 's something?

MDLLE. DE N. Certainly I do, and that something is without doubt merely the name of the other man.

MDLLE. DE L. Oh, how delightful!

MDLLE. DE N. Depend on it, when a girl cuts up rough over marrying a duke, — any duke, I don't care how old, or poor, or anything else he may be, — it 's because there 's somebody else she likes better. And that 's a subject she 's not likely to discuss with her maid.

COUNTESS R. The old sergeant ought to know.

MDLLE. DE L. He probably does, but I should n't care to ask him.

MDLLE. DE N. I should n't mind — that is, if the question were carefully led up to. He 's extremely gallant in his rough soldier-like way.

COUNTESS R. Just fancy him rearing and educating a young girl, the future heiress of Berkenfeldt at that; and do you know, she 's not at all ill bred — considering.

MDLLE. DE N. I don't see that anything has to be considered. Marie's manner may not be in every little detail that of one who has been bred at court; but it has a distinction of its own, — is original, spontaneous, and always perfectly ladylike.

MDLLE. DE L. All the same, it 's occasionally awkward, and one scarcely knows what to call it, — a sort of coltish.

COUNTESS R. When she is a duchess that will pass for piquant originality.

MDLLE. DE N. She 's not a duchess yet, my dear, and, somehow, I have a presentiment that this is going to be a case of slip between the cup and the lip. You know she has n't met the duke yet.

MDLLE. DE L. What has that to do with it?

MDLLE. DE N. What! You who know him, ask such a question? Suppose he were n't a duke, would you have him!

MDLLE. DE L. Of course not. But he is a duke.

COUNTESS R. And any girl in her senses would jump at him.

MDLLE. DE N. Even if there were some other whom she loved?

MDLLE. DE L. Oh, that 's mere sentimental stuff! If we give way to that sort of thing we should all be marrying poor lieutenants and younger sons —

MDLLE. DE R. And coachmen.

MDLLE. DE N. Hush!

BRUNO. [*Enters.*] The carriage of the Duchess of Ahremberg is coming up the grand avenue, and the Countess begs that the ladies will join her in welcoming her Grace.

MDLLE. DE N. Certainly we will, with pleasure.

MDLLE. DE L. Oh, Bruno, has the notary arrived?

COUNTESS R. And the duke! Has n't he come yet?

BRUNO. His Grace the duke is expected in half an hour. The notary is already in waiting.

MDLLE. DE N. [*To ladies.*] We had better go at once.

CHORUS.

There is a secret in this affair;
Ah, yes, a skeleton hidden somewhere;
She wears a sad and dejected air,
Not at all such as blushing brides should wear,
Poor thing! [*Exit Chorus.*

BRUNO. Now I must try to find the sergeant, and get him to dispose somehow of the wounded soldier, who is below stairs. It will never do to let mademoiselle see him or even know he 's here before the marriage contract is signed, or we shall find ourselves with all our fat in the fire. If ever she sets eyes on that French uniform I won't answer for the consequences.

[MARIE *enters from door, and* BRUNO *retires.*]

SONG. — MARIE.

The die is cast and my fate is decided.
I have none to protect, no friend to save me.
What to me is wealth, what is splendor?
Never can I by them be beguiled,
While I sigh for the love true and tender
That I knew when fate more kindly smiled.
Though arrayed in all that is rarest,
'Neath the diamonds my eyes with tears are dim;
What avails that they call me the fairest,
If the fairest I am not for him?
Ye loved companions of my childhood,
From whom hard fate hath bid me part,
Let me on earth once more behold you,
And rest my weary, troubled heart.
And yet this hated marriage
Fills every heart with pleasure.
In vain I sigh; I must to fate submit.
What sounds are those I hear?
Heavens! Can it be an illusion?
It is, it is the march of the Twentieth!
Oh, my loved companions!

[*Enter* CORPORAL *and Soldiers.*]

Oh what pleasure, joyous meeting,
Friends and companions of my heart!
Oh, the bliss of this fond greeting!
Would it were no more to part.
France, ah, my heart is thine.

Hail, glorious land of mine.
Thou by the right divine
Art ever victorious.
Proudly thy eagles shine,
As forward thy battle line
Advances so glorious.
Our banner advancing,
Where'er 't is unfurled,
Brings freedom and liberty,
Brings light to the world.

CHO. Marie, our daughter,
Oh what joy thus to meet,
From battle and from slaughter,
We come our child to greet.

MAR. Oh what joy once more to meet you,
To renew those days of yore,
For I feared no more to greet you,
Feared I ne'er should see your more.
Companions dear,
Now you are here.

MAR. *and* CHO. France, ah my heart is thine!
Hail, glorious land of mine!
Proudly thy eagles shine;
My heart is thine.

CORP. Comrades, I believe our child is really glad to see us again. She has n't forgotten her fathers.

MAR. Not one of then! Phillipe, Henri, and you, dear old Francois. But —

CORP. Well!

MAR. I — I miss —

CORP. Comrades, the child must mean our captain.

MAR. No, no. I mean —

[*Enter* TONY *with* SULPICE.]

TONY. Marie!

MAR. Ah!

SUL. It 's all right, comrades; in the family, you know.

TONY. Yes, Marie, here I am. I 'm not killed, though I 've done nothing but try to be. Never mind, I 'm glad now I 'm alive.

MAR. Are you sure, safe and sound, and no wounds?

TONY. One or two. I 'm grazed on my shoulder, I 've a cut on my leg, I 've had a bullet go clean through my side, and I 've lost the tip of my ear.

MAR. And gained promotion?

TONY. Yes, but I did n't deserve it.

MAR. No?

TONY. No!

SUL. Aha! 'T was the fortune of war. Eh, Tony?

MAR. Tell me pray how it was.

TONY. You know I wanted to be killed. I ran into all dangers on purpose. My officers thought it was my bravery, when it was only my love.

MAR. Poor Tony!

TONY. My first battle made me a corporal; my second, a sergeant; I hardly know why, except I tried all I could to be shot. Then, in my third battle, after doing such deeds as astonished myself and everybody else, there was a fort to be taken; it was a forlorn hope — everybody was sure to be killed. "Now 's your time, Tony," says I. I was first to volunteer, was accepted, and away I went, did n't I, Corporal?

CORP. Yes, Captain.

MAR. Well?

TONY. The men were shot down on all sides of me; that 's where I lost the tip of my ear. On I went till I found myself opposite to a Russian ensign, seven feet high. Oh! such a giant! The staff of his flag had been shot away; he seized me in his brawny arms, and what do you think he did?

MAR. What?

TONY. Tied me up in his flag, and threw me over his shoulder as his prisoner.

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha!

MAR. I wish I had been there! Well?

TONY. At that moment a cannon shot carried off his head; down he went and I under him, into the ditch. I got clear of my customer as soon as I could. The fort was taken, — scarcely a man was left but myself. I returned in triumph, wrapped up in the Russian flag, which I could n't get out of, was received with cheers, had the credit of carrying a fort, and taking an enemy's standard; and a month afterwards I woke up one morning, and found myself an officer.

SUL. There 's a hero!

[*Enter* BRUNO.]

BRUNO. Soldiers in the grand salon! soldiers in the kitchen! soldiers in the pantry! soldiers in the wine cellar! soldiers everywhere! damn me, it rains soldiers.

MAR. What is it, Bruno? What do you want?
BRUNO. The — the duchess has arrived!
MAR. Heavens!
SUL. Sacre bleu!
MAR. I had quite forgotten.
SUL. What shall we do?
MAR. Comrades, our friend here, my aunt's steward, proposes to treat you to a bottle of wine; I hope you won't refuse him!
SOLDIERS. No, no! certainly not.
MAR. These are my friends, Bruno, and I request you will treat them well, and see that they want for nothing.
BRUNO. But, mademoiselle —
SUL. Attention! right about face! march!
BRUNO. But I can't march!
SUL. You can't march, eh?
BRUNO. But I sha'n't march.
SUL. Away with him, boys!

[*Exit Soldiers with* BRUNO.

(SONG. — TONY. INTRODUCED.)

MAR. I'm very glad to see you, Tony, — but —
TONY. But what, Marie?
MAR. I 'm very unhappy.
TONY. For what cause?
MAR. Because I 'm going to be married!
TONY. Married! To whom?
MAR. I hardly know. During the two years that I have been quartered with my aunt, I have never heard of my regiment, and thinking you were all killed in Russia or disbanded, I promised to yield to the wishes of my aunt, — and — and —

[*Enter* SULPICE.]

SUL. Marry a man who is n't one of her fathers, — only a duke; but don't be cast down now, Captain. She is n't married to the duke yet.

TRIO. — MARIE, TONY, *and* SULPICE.

Though we parted have been,
We are now met again,
And the wrong shall at last be righted.
We who comrades have been
Still are comrades as when
We marched in the Twentieth united.
SUL. Oh, fond remembrance!

TONY. Oh, days of glory!
MAR. Forever vanished!
TONY. They will return.
(*To* SULPICE.) 'T is you must speak for me.
MAR. Yes, do without delay.
TONY. I claim your faithful promise.
SUL. Oh, dear, what shall I say!

ENSEMBLE.

Though we parted have been, etc.

[*Enter* COUNTESS.]

COUNTESS. A stranger! In the French uniform! Marie, what does this mean?
MAR. It means —
SUL. Yes, madame, it means —
MAR. It means Tony, aunt! Yes, Tony!
SUL. Yes, madame, Captain Tony of the Twentieth Grenadiers of the line.
MAR. Whom I 've known, ah, ever so long, and who saved my life, — and whom — whom —
SUL. Whom she loves, madame! There it 's over.
COUNTESS. Loves! Horror!
TONY. Madame!
COUNTESS. Not a word, sir! Not a word! My niece is this very hour to be formally betrothed to his Grace the Duke of Ahremberg! That is settled!
SUL. There is one thing not yet settled, Madame Countess, and it may as well be considered before we go any further; Marie has never yet consented to marry your duke.
COUNTESS. Not consented! She has n't been asked.
SUL. Precisely! But I 'll warrant you the duke has asked how much money she 's got.
COUNTESS. Impertinent! (*To* MARIE.) Marie, leave us. Go to your room.
MAR. I don't wish to.
COUNTESS. Mademoiselle! go to your room!
MAR. Very well, madame, I obey. [*Exit.*]
COUNTESS. (*To* TONY.) As for you, sir, I — I —
SUL. Pardon me, madame; but perhaps the captain had better retire for a moment.
COUNTESS. I was about to request the captain to retire permanently. We have no further use for him here.

SUL. I would n't be too sure of that, Miladi, but, at all events, for the present, we can spare him. (*To* TONY.) Join our comrades below; I 'll let you know when you 're wanted.

TONY. Remember, we are in your hands, madame. [*Exit.*]

SUL. And now, Madame Countess, that we have disposed of our skirmish line,— that 's the youngsters, — it begins to look as though we had brought on a serious engagement, does n't it?

COUNTESS. What do you mean?

SUL. If you will sit for a moment, I will explain.

COUNTESS. I don't care to sit down. Tell me what you have to say, and make it short.

SUL. As short as possible, Miladi. But you had better sit down. As you like! well then, in this matter of Tony,— Captain Tony of the Twentieth, — and your niece —

COUNTESS. There is nothing further to be said on the subject.

SUL. Oh yes, Miladi, pardon me; I think there is, — one little word. But first let me understand! You positively decline to entertain any proposal of Captain Tony for the hand of your niece?

COUNTESS. Positively! The thing 's absurd.

SUL. What, then, if he should ask for your daughter?

COUNTESS. My daughter!

SUL. Yes, Countess, your daughter, Marie, whom you sent on that fateful night to her father, your husband, in order that he might embrace his child, and whom we found in the arm of your dead servant, and adopted. What if he should ask for your daughter?

COUNTESS. Oh, spare me, spare me!

SUL. I cannot, Miladi Countess! My duty is to the child. You, her own mother, would force her to a marriage that she abhors. It is for me to see that she is united to the man she loves.

COUNTESS. This is nonsense! By what right do you interfere, sir?

SUL. A strange question, madame, to address to one who has loved and protected her all her life! I have been father, aye, and mother to her, ever since she could walk! and, damn me, madame, I 'll fight for her now against all the countesses and dukes in Austria!

COUNTESS. After all, how do you know that Marie is — is —

SUL. Your daughter, madame? It is very simple. From our first interview I suspected something, I could n't tell what, but something. Of course, I said nothing to the child — to anybody, in fact; but I did n't forget, and kept my pickets well to the fore. Only about three weeks ago I was out after antelope, on the tall hills about eight miles distant, and stopped for milk at the cottage

that is well nigh hidden by the pines in the little black valley; you know the place, madame? You know, too, whom I found living there, as your pensioner, — old Gretel, who had been Marie's nurse, — who was wife of the peasant whom we found dead that night, and who, knowing me to be Marie's friend and companion, and, supposing that I was aware of all the circumstances, spoke to me of the past quite unreservedly and frankly. The good old woman is growing a trifle weak here, madame, and is n't quite as safe a confidante as she used to be. You see 't is very simple.

COUNTESS. What am I to do?

SUL. That also is very simple. Send the duke about his business, and let Marie wed the man of her choice.

COUNTESS. But what will the world say? These things are never done in society!

SUL. Not often, perhaps; still, occasionally a girl marries the man she loves. Do what is right, madame, and chance the rest.

COUNTESS. Shall I have to tell her all?

SUL. Let me do that, Countess; it will be the easier way.

BAB. [*Enters.*] The ladies!

COUNTESS. What is that?

BAB. The ladies, Countess, to conduct mademoiselle to the grand salon for the signing of the contracts.

COUNTESS. (*To* SULPICE.) Go! go now and tell her.

[*Exit* SULPICE.

[*Enter* LADIES.]

COUNTESS. My — niece — will be with us directly.

FINALE.

[*Enter* MARIE, *followed by* SULPICE.]

COUNTESS. Marie!

MAR. Oh! my mother!

COUNTESS. My daughter! silence!

SUL. Be cautious!

CHO. At last her joy will be completed.

MAR. Must I sign?

COUNTESS. It is my wish, dearest.

[*Soldiers heard outside.*]

CHO. Gracious Heaven! what commotion!
What shouting!
What can all this mean?

BRUNO. Hurrah for the Twentieth! Huzza! I 'm a Twentieth-ethster myself.

[*Enter Soldiers with* CORPORAL.]

CHO. Child beloved, we come to save you,
Cast aside all vain alarm,
Aunt nor friends shall now enslave you,
We will guard you from all harm.
Dry your tears and weep no longer,
We will show that we 're the stronger,
'T is to save you we are here;
Come, then, daughter, — have no fear.

TONY. Oh, friends, unless you save her,
By force they will enslave her;
To me her faith is plighted,
My suit with scorn they slighted,
Oh, save us from despair!

LADIES. Whence came you? What seek you?

SOLDIERS. She 's our daughter, to him affianced,
She 's our own, — our Vivandiere.

LADIES. What a low and vile connection,
Vivandiere to horrid soldiers!

SUL. This will end the Countess' dreams.

LADIES. Can this be so!

MAR. 'T is so!
Can I forget them, so true and so tender,
Who guarded in childhood my life with loving care?
Rather will I wealth and rank all surrender,
My heart is with them, and for them I all will dare.

LADIES. A candid, sweet confession,
A grateful heart's expression.

MAR. The truth is spoken! oh, my mother,
Have pity on me!

TONY. What will she say?

COUNTESS. Ah, my daughter, shall I who love you dearly
Cause so much grief?
Stay, I charge ye.
Children, I will not for vain ambition's sake
See your young lives blighted;
My pride I now will conquer, and if you,
Marie, truly love him,
You shall be united.
(*Placing* MARIE'S *hand in* TONY'S.) Yes, take her.

SUL. Miladi Countess, that 's well done.
But for my long mustache
I kiss you, by the powers —
LADIES. This is scandalous, 't is shocking,
Yet the match is not so bad.
OMNES. France, ah, my heart is thine,
Hail, glorious land of mine!
Proudly thy eagles shine;
My heart is thine.

END OF OPERA.

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